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II.—*South Australia.*

SOME discoveries have been made by whalers in the western part of South Australia, which add to the information respecting that region communicated in Mr. Eyre's reports and journals. The extent and value of the new information will perhaps be most correctly indicated by reprinting here:—1st. A report drawn up by the editor of the '*Southern Australian*,' from the verbal communications of Richard Harris, one of the whalers—2nd. A report, drawn up by Mr. Smith, resident magistrate at Port Lincoln, from the verbal communications of George Cummings, Harris's companion—3rd. Some remarks, by the editor of the '*Southern Australian*,' upon the seeming discrepancies of the two statements. East of Adelaide an instructive excursion has been made by Governor Gawler across the Murray, and as far as the valley of the Glenelg, connecting the labours of Mr. Tyers with the observations in the Adelaide district.

I.—STATEMENT OF RICHARD HARRIS.

"We have received, from rather an unexpected quarter, a valuable and interesting contribution to the geography of the country to the westward of Port Lincoln.

"We have just conversed with a person named Richard Harris, now in the employment of the Surveyor-General, who, in the end of August last, along with his mate, George Cummings, performed the arduous journey by land from a whaling station at Fowler's Bay to Port Lincoln.

"Calculating the distance at 200 miles, and that they would get supplied at Peters' Islands and at Streaky Bay, where there were whaling stations, they took with them ten days' provisions. At Peters' Island they got a chart of the coast, which was of the greatest service. On arriving at Anxious Bay they got tired of keeping to the coast, where they had difficulty in getting water, and hoping also to shorten their way, they struck off at the salt lagoon, called by Mr. Eyre Lake Newland, and held a due E. course into the interior. This course they kept for two days, over sand-hills and a scrubby country, when they came to a high conical hill, with good grass on it and good soil. They found also at intervals granite rocks, near which they always found water. When at the coast they thought this mountain very near, but found it to be two days' journey, or about 50 miles. It is probably Mount Wedge of Mr. Eyre, but at a greater distance than he placed it, judging by the eye. They now found the country to the E. and S. of the finest description. They encamped near a stream of considerable size, which ran to the S.W. From the hill they saw the bluff near Waldegrave Isles, and, being afraid that they would lose themselves if they went farther into the interior, they determined to travel again by the coast, and cross over to Port Lincoln from Coffin's Bay. On descending, they came to a plain which extended in breadth as far as the eye could reach. This plain was covered with such rich green grass that, as Harris ex-

pressed it, he almost imagined himself in a fine grazing farm in England. The sward was very close, and the grass was half up his leg. The soil is a dark loam. They were sure they had come near a station, having never been in this colony before,* and they constantly broke out into expressions of delight with the scenery. They travelled through this vast plain for two days, and found the country equally good all the time, but there are very few trees. They also found a great many pools or lagoons of fresh water, which were large, deep, and apparently permanent. They were constantly in the expectation of killing ducks in the pools, but were unsuccessful. They succeeded, however, in killing a large brown kangaroo, which was exceedingly agreeable, as their provisions had just failed them. This they roasted, and it served them the rest of the way. At the end of two days they came to a belt of scrub with grassy spots here and there, which continued to the sea-shore. They journeyed from sunrise till sunset, with two hours' rest, in a straight line, taking their course from the sun, so that they must have walked 25 miles per day. The fine plain they mention is, therefore, about 50 miles in length, and the breadth unknown.

"They saw only seven natives, two of them, stout made men, they met before they came to Mount Wedge, who kindly showed them a water hole.

"Mount Wedge is placed by Mr. Eyre in lat. $33^{\circ} 30' S.$, and long. $134^{\circ} E.$, but from Harris's statement we should say it is farther to the N.W.

"We have looked at Flinders' chart to ascertain if there is any anchorage between Waldegrave's Isles and the shore, but find he had made no soundings. We perceive, however, a sounding of 10 fathoms close to the S. end of the large island. If there was safe anchorage, with such a good country in the neighbourhood, it would be an admirable place for a settlement.

"It is remarkable that after all the explorations that have been made, and all that has been said about Port Lincoln, so little in reality is known of the large district westward of it. Southward of the Gawler Range discovered by Mr. Eyre, and bounded by the ocean and the line of country on Spencer's Gulf, there is a compact district of a triangular form, nearly equilateral, measuring 160 miles each side, or about 13,000 square miles in extent, which has never been penetrated except by these adventurous whalers.

"We sincerely trust that the opening now almost providentially made, may lead to the most cheering and important results."

2.—STATEMENT OF GEORGE CUMMINGS.

"*The new discovery to the westward of Port Lincoln.*

"Gentlemen,—Previous to reading Richard Harris's account of his journey from Fowler's Bay to Coffin's Bay I had heard from his fellow-traveller, George Cummings, a verbal statement, which differs in some few particulars from that of Harris.

* The three whaling stations mentioned above were occupied by parties from Hobart Town, from which our travellers had last come.

“ From Harris’s account it would seem that they never left the coast till they reached Anxious Bay. The fact is, according to Cummings, that, from the sand-hills at the N. side of Streaky Bay, they saw an apparently open country running from the E. end of the Bay. Arriving there, they left Mr. Eyre’s track, which was distinctly marked, and took a south-easterly course, which brought them to Mount Cooper (Mr. Eyre’s course having been S.W. to a spring marked on his chart, and then S.E. till he reached Lake Newland*). This was a distance of about 50 miles, and Cummings describes it as an open grassy country, though they did not see any water. At Mount Cooper they fell in with several small streams, from which they filled their water-kegs, and proceeded on to Lake Newland, where they again fell in with Mr. Eyre’s tracks. There they met with four natives, two of whom ran away, and the other two showed them a spring of fresh water, which is probably the one laid down by Mr. Eyre near Lake Newland. From hence they continued along the coast for two days over sand-hill and scrub, but, on arriving at the S.E. point of Anxious Bay, they took an easterly course into the interior, which brought them, in two days more, to the mount which Harris calls a conical hill, and which Cummings describes as resembling a wedge; one end, towards the S.E., being a high bluff, and gradually falling in the opposite direction. The country they passed over from Anxious Bay to Mount Wedge was a fine open country, with high grass and well-watered, and it was here they found the pool of which Harris speaks. This country answers Harris’s description, except that, instead of wandering in this vast plain two days, it occupied them three, when they encamped at the junction of three or four streams which take their rise on the S.W. side of the Mount. At the base of Mount Wedge Cummings says they saw pines of a large size. Leaving the Mount, they took a direct southerly course, which brought them to Point Drummond, where they joined the Governor Gawler, and sailed in her to Port Lincoln. From Mount Wedge till within a few miles of the coast near Point Drummond, they found the country undulating, grassy, and well watered, lightly timbered with she-oak. If you look at Mr. Eyre’s chart, you will see that a due easterly course from Lake Newland would not reach Mount Wedge, which makes it probable that Cummings’s account is the correct one. But he quite agrees with Harris as to the kind of country they saw; and he says he frequently expressed to his fellow-traveller his surprise that such a beautiful country was unoccupied. In all directions round Mount Wedge, the country had the same appearance of open grassy land lightly timbered. Mr. Eyre places Mount Wedge in $33^{\circ} 30' S.$, and $135^{\circ} 20'$, *not* $134^{\circ} E.$; but Cummings, on examining the chart here, thinks it is in $33^{\circ} 40' S.$, and $135^{\circ} 30' E.$ However Cummings and Harris may differ in details, they agree in the main, that they discerned an excellent country of great extent, grassy, and well watered; and this, I trust, will be the means of inducing the Government to send a party to explore, and make charts of, a country doubtlessly good, very little known, and very much required. Indeed, if his Excellency intends (as I am informed he does) to visit Port Lincoln, he will have an excellent opportunity of judging for himself,

* To prevent misunderstanding, we beg to correct a trifling error here. Mr. Eyre arrived at Lake Newland from the opposite direction to that here stated.

and adding to our very imperfect knowledge of the geography of a very important portion of our beautiful province.

“ I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

“ MATTHEW SMITH.

“ *Gawler-place, Adelaide, Dec. 18, 1843.*”

3.—REMARKS OF THE EDITOR OF THE ‘SOUTHERN AUSTRALIAN.’

“ Mr. Smith notices discrepancies between the statements of the two parties; but a little explanation from us may, perhaps, go far to put matters to right. We found Harris to be rather a silent man, and he spoke principally in answer to our questions, and, as we only examined him upon the subject of the good country and as to his route after he left Lake Newland, we did not ascertain the fact of his having struck into the interior from Streaky Bay, and of his visit to Mount Cooper, so that here Cummings’s statement is additional—not different. The same may be said of the rest of Cummings’s statement, and it is, therefore, a valuable addition to that of Harris. Mr. Smith states, in his letter, that an easterly course from Lake Newland will not strike Mount Wedge. On referring to the large map, taken from Mr. Eyre’s original tracings, we find this to be a mistake, as the Lake and the Mount are nearly in the same latitude; and if the departure was taken from a spot near the S.E. end of the Lake, the travellers, by holding a due E. course, would strike the very centre of the Mount. We find that by a typographical error Mount Wedge was, by our account, placed in long. 134° , in place of 135° , the meridian line of which last passes over it. We should also have said that Mount Wedge is farther to the north-east, in place of north-west, than Mr. Eyre placed it; but Mr. Smith and Cummings must be wrong in placing it so far to the E. as $135^{\circ} 20'$ or $30'$, as a ‘direct southerly course’ from these points would have taken a traveller much nearer Sleaford Bay than Point Drummond. We had almost forgot to mention that the apparent discrepancy of Mount Wedge being called conical by one, and like a wedge by the other, is easily reconciled, because it might have been conical on one side and like a wedge on another. It may or may not be wedge-like, but we understand it was named after a Mr. Wedge, of Van Diemen’s Land.”

III.—*Progress of Discovery in the Middle Island of the New Zealand Group.*

THE narrative of an exploring party from Nelson, published in the first part of the present volume, threw some additional light on the conformation of the land on the S. side of Cook’s Strait. The four short papers which we have here classed under the above title render that information more precise, and carry it further into the interior. The account of Mr. Cotterell’s route connects the valley of the Waimea, opening into Tasman’s Gulf, with the valley of the Wairau, opening into Cloudy Bay, by